

PRESERVATION OF UNIQUE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

REPORT ON CASES SUBMITTED TO THE NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL.

The Society submitted three groups of urgent cases for preservation of unique communities to the newly created Nature Conservation Council on the 24th May, 1963. A summary of these cases with the acreages requested follows:—

1. North Cape—Spirit Bay.

- (i) Kerr Point shrubland (50 acres). This community contains a number of endemic plant species and varieties about which knowledge is still scanty.
- (ii) Mixed coastal forest at Unuwahao (100 acres).
- (iii) Kauri forest at Te Paki, Spirits Bay (50 acres).

These two forest communities contain a number of endemic land snails, slugs, flightless beetles, harvestmen, earthworms and other invertebrates as well as providing a source of information concerning many plants at the northern limits of their range. At present these forest remnants are deteriorating rapidly as a result of stock and burning.

2. Moana tuatua peat bog (100 acres).

This bog is notable for the presence of the tall rush *Sporadanthus traversii*, the club moss *Lycopodium serpentinum* and the orchid *Corybas carsei*. *Sporadanthus* is rapidly becoming extinct in the Waikato region while the other two species are apparently confined to Moana tuatua. A reserve of this raised bog community, apart from its value to the study of peat formation, would be a useful base-line for comparison with the agriculturally developed part of the bog.

3. Chatham Island communities

The Chatham Islands contain at least 30 endemic species of plants and 16 endemic species or subspecies of birds. Although Little Mangare and South East Island have been declared vegetation and wildlife sanctuaries, there are no reserves of any kind on Chatham Island itself. Several communities are unique to the main island and the Society recommended reserving 8 representative examples of these, totalling 500 acres:—

- (i) Sandy sea-shore community on Kekerione sand (20 acres)
- (ii) Lowland karaka on Tiki brown clay (100 acres). The trunks of some of the karaka in this community carry "Mori" dendrologlyphs
- (iii) Sand dune forest on Te One loamy sand (20 acres)
- (iv) Swamp forest on Huro mottled clay (20 acres)
- (v) Limestone forest on Ohuku sandy clay (20 acres)
- (vi) Coastal cliff vegetation on Awatapu steep-land soils (100 acres)
- (vii) Tableland communities on peat soils (100-200 acres)
- (viii) Lagoon-shore and salt meadow communities on Te Whanga peaty loam.

These submissions were received sympathetically by the Nature Conservation Council but at the time of writing (18th October, 1963) the Society had not received information to the effect that any of these reserves would definitely be established.